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BOOK REVIEWS

A History of the United States Since the Civil War. By Ellis Paxson Oberholtzer. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1917. Pp. 579. Price \$3.50.

The multitude of important events which fill the period to be covered by the proposed work of Dr. Oberholtzer has never been adequately treated. The worth of this volume, the first of six which are to discuss the major happenings since the close of the war for Southern independence, suggests the hope that no accident may interrupt the regular appearance of the remaining sections. This deals with the troubled years from 1865-1868, a few brief seasons, but nevertheless an interval filled with controversy and crowded with instruction. It includes the events from the collapse of the Confederate States to the purchase of Alaska.

At the outset the author describes the great American tragedy, the assassination of Abraham Lincoln with which was bound up the succession of Andrew Johnson to the Presidency. Perhaps for the latter that was a moment of almost perfect happiness in which at the Kirkwood House he took the oath of office. It is certain that from his view the book of fate was concealed. If his eye could have pierced the future, even his acknowledged moral and physical courage might have hesitated to accept this latest gift of fortune. His sunny hours were few. Until he laid down the cares of office, nearly four years later, he was oppressed with responsibility and was harassed by strife. Care waited on his uprisings as well as his down-sittings and doubtless presided in his dreams. The author does not attempt to portray the unnumbered woes of President Johnson, but by a succession of touches the reader is convinced that, notwithstanding the rather obvious limitations of the President, the unending attacks upon his official acts were instigated by feelings more often vindictive than patriotic. The ferocious spirit of many opposition speeches and the rancorous verse of the fluent scribblers of the press show with photographic fidelity the madness of the time. Cynicism, and libel, and slander were chief among the evil spirits that ruled the hour.

The first impressions of the new President, his attitude toward the recent enemies of the United States, and his endeavor to continue Lincoln's system of reconstruction are the principal themes of the first chapter. This is logically followed by an outline of the task which confronted Johnson, namely, a revival of the prostrate South. Amongst other things this part of the narrative deals, by way of suggestion, with a description of the destruction of its former industrial system, the waste of war, the interruption of agriculture, the disappearance of commerce, and the worthless currency of the Confederacy.

It is well known that in the work of reconstruction President Johnson had been exceedingly active between May 29, 1865, and the meeting of the Thirty-ninth Congress in December following. At that time there were waiting, in Washington, Senators and Representatives from nearly all the late seceding States. They had been sent to the national capital by the States reorganized under the guidance of President Johnson, who appears to have had little doubt that they would be admitted to seats in Congress. In this expectation he was disappointed, for instead of admitting the Southern delegations that body appointed a joint committee of fifteen (nine Representatives and six Senators), instructed to inquire into the condition of the commonwealths of the late Confederacy and ascertain whether any of them were entitled to representation in Congress. The conclusion of this celebrated committee was to admit the delegation from Tennessee, restored under Lincoln's method, to suggest measures of reconstruction, and an amendment to the Constitution (the fourteenth). Soon afterward the work of restoring the Southern States to their normal relations in the Union was taken from the hands of the President and assumed by the Congress. Mr. Johnson, indeed, made a spirited exercise of his veto power, but he was quite unequal to a contest with the legislative branch, many of whose members were unprincipled in their opposition to his policy and who, though devoted partisans, appear to have been of doubtful patriotism.

In the following section, "Congress in Control," the author discusses the beginnings of legislative reconstruction. This comprehends a summary of Southern politics, an enumeration of the petitions for executive clemency, the popularity in the

South of ex-Confederate candidates for office, Southern legislation relative to the negro, and the subject of negro suffrage; also the continuation of the Freedmen's Bureau, the "conquered province" theory of Thaddeus Stevens, and the vetoes of the President. These themes are concisely, fairly, and ably treated by the author.

Having made a survey of the South in the years immediately after the war, Dr. Oberholtzer presents to his readers a description of conditions in the victorious North. This chapter treats of money and prices, of industrial activity, to which was closely related the extension of railway lines and the laying of the Atlantic cable. The influence of its successful operation is also noticed. There is likewise a sketch of American shipping and of the trade with the Orient as well as the navigation of our interior waterways. The development and the resources of the prairie States are described and the extraordinary growth of Western cities such as Chicago impressively told. This part of the narrative enumerates important discoveries, useful inventions, and describes immigration, at that time chiefly from Ireland and Germany. This part of the book contains an animated description of the large-scale production of petroleum, mention of its many uses, and a suggestion of the reckless speculation which it stimulated. The fantastic dress of women, extravagant living, social splendor, and the rise of summer resorts are deemed worthy of notice. Accounts of fraud, speculation, and defalcation complete this chapter and show that the golden age was a period somewhat earlier than the middle sixties.

The following section considers the trans-Mississippi region, the public domain, and the operation of the Homestead Act; also the mining territories, which include Utah and a brief sketch of the Mormons. The author states that "Perhaps not one in four of the Mormons was a polygamist, but plural marriage was openly defended, as it had been from the beginning, by the leaders of the strange sect." The reviewer, however, is of the opinion that Mormonism was not polygamous at the outset and did not become so until it had attained to prosperity. After a visit to Washington, in 1844, the prophet, Joseph Smith, returned to Nauvoo and announced himself as a candidate for the Presidency. It was then that he taught the doctrine of spiritual

wives, chartered sisters of charity, and Cyprian saints. When he began to practice his new principles, there was a secession of many older members, who immediately began the publication of the *Nauvoo Expositor*. It was the destruction of its press by the Mormons that led to the interference of the gentiles of Carthage and the murder in the jail of that town of the prophet and his brother Hyrum. The routes of western travel as well as the modes and their countless perils are also described. The construction of the first railway to the Pacific coast and accounts of all the chief incidents of that enterprise belong to this period. Chinese laborers, "road agents," and "vigilantes" appear at this point in the narrative.

It is not easy in any outline history of the country between the Mississippi and the Pacific to omit a consideration of the native races. A well written chapter treats many phases of the Indian question. But on the whole it is not a record of which an American would care to boast. Perhaps the management of Indian affairs since the Civil War may fairly be rated as the most insignificant of our achievements. The author isolates his subject and examines it as if Americans were lonely dwellers on our planet. Doubtless he feels that it is not in harmony with his plan to sound the depths and shoals of the Indian controversy; also that his task was merely to present a glimpse of the ancient race as they swept by his restricted chronological zone. Some readers will regret, from the instalment which he has given, that the author did not contrast our treatment of the aboriginal races with that of the Dominion Government, the earlier British, the French Canadian or the Latin-American governments. Moreover, there has been at home missionary endeavor not unworthy of notice. Of this nothing has been said. The comparative method is always instructive, in fact, in many activities it is the beginning of learning.

The war upon the President is the appropriate title of one of Dr. Oberholtzer's concluding chapters; it comprehends a multitude of topics more or less intimately related to the main theme. Race riots, political conventions, martial law, presidential egotism, presidential oratory, presidential peculiarities and presidential policies dance through these interesting pages. Rowdy stump speakers contributed to heighten the animosities of

a ruffianly campaign. This battle had gone against the President. Thaddeus Stevens frequently appears at this stage and was in fact the presiding spirit. The activity of Representative Ashley, the impeachment of President Johnson, the attack of Congress on the Supreme Court, Congressional usurpation, the harsh treatment of Jefferson Davis and other subjects of intrinsic interest make up an important chapter.

Accounts of Mexico, Ireland, and Alaska, countries which have little in common, complete the present volume, which examines an extremely important part of our *post bellum* history, namely, the first stage of congressional reconstruction. Basing one's narrative on different facts, it would be possible to write a fairer account of Fenianism.

This work is based upon biographies, newspaper articles, diaries, monographs, public records, reminiscences, speeches, judicial decisions, histories, narratives of travel, etc. All have been carefully examined and used intelligently. The statesman will find in this book much that is instructive, while the reader who seeks entertainment will not be disappointed. But it is particularly valuable to the student of American institutional history.

CHARLES H. MCCARTHY.

A Grammar of English Heraldry. By W. H. St. John Hope. Cambridge University Press, 1913.

This handbook on one of the auxiliary sciences of history is published in the series of "Cambridge Manuals of Science and Literature," and gives in the compass of 120 pages the main facts of English Heraldry. After a brief introductory chapter, the author gives a full description of the heraldic charges in a chapter entitled "The Grammar of Heraldry," notwithstanding the fact that the whole book, which covers a much wider field, is called by the same name. The next chapter is devoted to heraldic fields other than the shield, which would seem too much attention paid to a minor point, while two further chapters deal with the differencing of arms and heraldic accessories. The largest part of the book is taken up by an historical sketch of English Heraldry, special emphasis being placed on the Rolls of Arms, and the period of the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries.